

WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD NORTH COAST REGION

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

August 2002

TIMBER HARVEST DIVISION

Simpson Resources Company Field Tour

[Staff Contact: Holly Lundborg]

On July 23 and 24, 2002, representatives from Simpson Resources Company (formerly Simpson Redwood Company) organized and led a two-day field tour for Regional Water Board staff on a portion of their timberland in western Humboldt County. The field tour was held to allow staff from the Regional Water Board and Simpson Resources Company (SRCO) to meet together in the woods to observe and discuss current timber operations and specific land management practices.



[Redwood Creek Rotary Screw Trap]

The tour was organized to allow discussion of specific issues of concern while observing the practice in the woods. Issues included such diverse practices as broadcast burning and site preparation, harvest of trees adjacent and within watercourses, road and crossing abandonment and water quality instream monitoring. The field tour was well organized and informative. In addition to observing actual on the ground effects of timber operations, Regional Water Board staff were privileged to see a spotted owl feeding, monitoring of outgoing fish populations in the Redwood Creek rotary screw fish trap, and observing coho salmon young of the year in Ryan Creek. All the

participants expressed an appreciation of the effort and dialogue that went into field tour. Regional Water Board staff expects to meet with SRCO staff again in the near future to further the resource protection discussion.

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT DIVISION

Watershed Management Division Staff Meetings on Klamath & Trinity Planning Issues

[Staff Contact: Lauren Clyde]

Regional Water Board Planning Unit staff have begun meeting regularly with the Hoopa, Karuk, Yurok Tribes and other agencies (including USEPA, USFWS, and NMFS) to discuss water quality planning issues of joint concern on the Klamath and Trinity Rivers. Joint meetings took place in May and August 2002. The Yurok Tribe will host the next scheduled meeting in November in Weitchpec.

Regular agenda items include updates by the tribes on the status of their Water Quality Control Plans (Basin Plans) and updates from Regional Water Board staff on Basin Plan amendments currently underway. Other topics of discussion include setting appropriate water quality objectives for pollutants and coordination of



monitoring efforts.

[Klamath River above Salmon River, June 2002]

WATERSHED PROTECTION DIVISION

New Unit Created to Address the Increase in Grant Funding

[Staff Contact: Dave Hope]

The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board staff has created a new unit to increase the efficiency in processing contracts and recognize the swiftly growing area of grants. This reorganization will consolidate work on grants, contracts and special projects. The Administration, Planning, Watershed Assessment & Monitoring, and Watershed Protection Units have in the past carried out these functions. Dave Hope heads up this new unit with Janet Blake, Michele Fortner, Lynda Jacobsen, and Bernadette Reed as staff and Kelsey Trefethen as student assistant.

Recent increases in grant funding have made it necessary to consolidate and streamline the processing of this important source of revenue to

mitigate nonpoint source pollution with other contract-related work. Future anticipated Propositions and existing 205j grants also make this area the largest source of funding in our region. The graph below shows the sharp increase in 319h, Proposition 13 and future Proposition 40 grant contracts.

The new Grants, Contracts and Special Projects Unit will continue to rely on the support and expertise of staff throughout our Regional Water Board Office to identify priority projects and will recruit qualified proponents to carry out this important work. In a time of shrinking budgets this unit will seek projects and money to conduct monitoring, TMDL implementation and other under-funded water quality programs and duties. The creation of this unit is a proactive step in recognizing the important role grants will play in encouraging and assisting nonprofits, watershed groups, landowners and local governments play in addressing nonpoint source pollution.

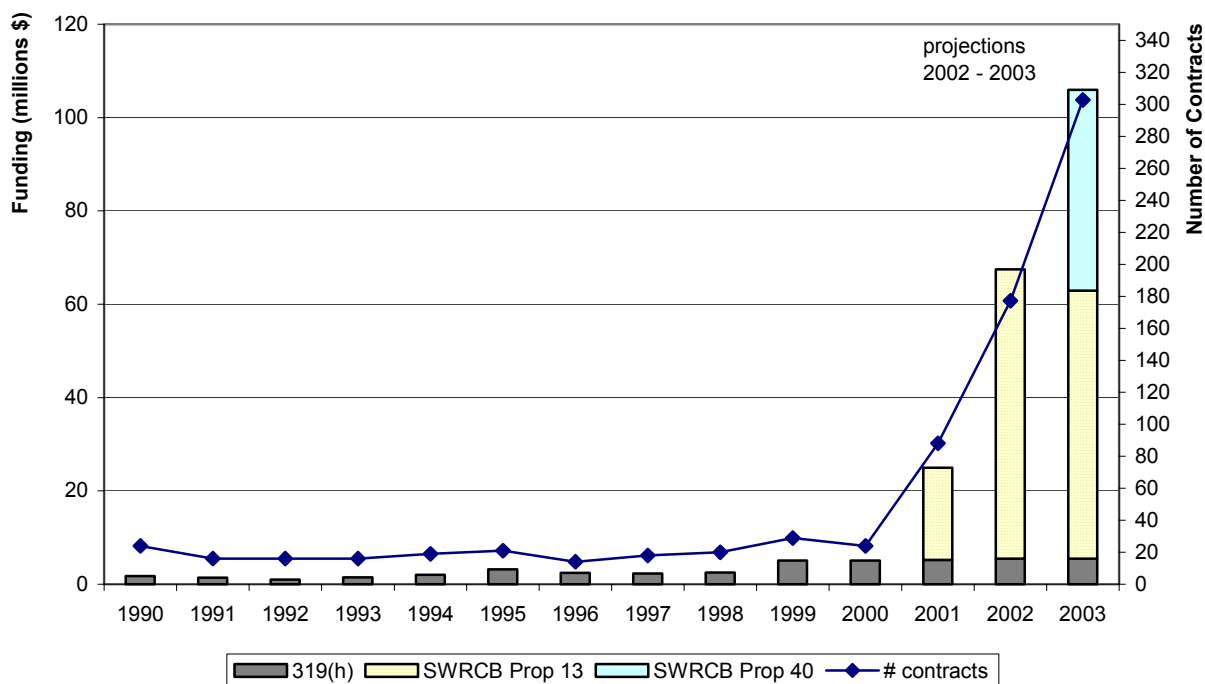


Figure 1. SWRCB 319(h), Prop 13, and Prop 40 Grant Programs

City of Sebastopol Raw Sewage Spill

Staff Contact: Paul Keiran

At 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, August 7, 2002, Sebastopol public works personnel noticed a variation in the pump efficiency at their sewer pump station. This pump station sends raw sewage via a 2 mile force main and gravity trunk line, which conveys the sewage to the Santa Rosa subregional wastewater treatment facility. At 11:00 a.m., 5-inch by 12-inch break in the force main was discovered just south of Highway 12, approximately 50 feet east of the Laguna de Santa Rosa. City and county personnel immediately placed warning signs throughout Laguna in areas downgradient of the spill.



[Staff member Paul Keiran is shown here with a dead catfish related to the Sebastopol Spill.]

The force main was shut down by 12:30 p.m., with all raw sewage subsequently trucked to the Santa Rosa plant. Personnel from various city, state and private concerns immediately began the process of both pumping raw sewage out of the Laguna and aerating the Laguna. By 8:00 p.m., a temporary repair was made on the force main, with regular sanitary sewer service restored to Sebastopol shortly thereafter.

Numerous fish and other aquatic life were noted to have succumbed to the spill in the area immediately downgradient from the point of discharge. Fortunately, flowrates within the Laguna were exceedingly low, and sewage was primarily restricted to an area within 300-400 feet of where sewage entered the stream. By August 9 approximately six million gallons water had been pumped out of the Laguna and sprayed onto nearby fields. Aeration of the Laguna continued for several weeks.



[Sewer Spill Damaged Pipe, August 7, 2002, 4:31 p.m.]

It is estimated that the spill began at 5 p.m. on August 6, resulting in approximately 440,000 gallons of raw sewage being discharged to the Laguna. Permanent repair for the damaged section of force main is scheduled for October 7, 2002. The City of Sebastopol will address the overall condition of the entire force main at that time. At present, City officials are addressing issues related to a lack of pressure gauges and valves within the force main, and the potential for replacing all or parts of the entire force main.

CLEANUP AND ABATEMENT ORDERS

There was one Cleanup and Abatement Order issued during the month of August 2002. The Order was issued to Scotia Pacific Company LLC, and The Pacific Lumber company for North and South Forks Elk River in accordance with a directive from the Regional Water Board.

CALIFORNIA WATER CODE SECTION 13267 LETTER ORDERS

There were no California Water Code section 13267(b) Letter Orders issued during the month of August 2002.

SPILLS, COMPLAINTS, AND INVESTIGATIONS

Twelve complaints were received during the months of August 2002. One spill was reported and is described on page 3 of this report.

ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL LIABILITY COMPLAINTS/ ORDERS

No Administrative Civil Liability (ACL) Complaints were issued during August 2002.

UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK CLEANUP FUND PROGRAM

For the month of August 2002, there has been a total of \$793,459 in funds issued to tank owners in Region 1 from the Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund. There were no letters of commitment issued during the month of August 2002.

CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 401 CERTIFICATIONS

Eighteen new applications for Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification were received in August 2002. Sixteen 401 Certifications were issued in August 2002.

Information regarding all proposed certifications is available at our Internet web site at:

http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb1/Public_Notices/401certs/notice401.html

PUBLIC FILE REVIEW

From August 1 through August 31, 2002, no written requests were made for review of the Regional Water Board's records. In addition, a total of 27 people came into the office and requested file review during the month of August 2002.

STAFF HIRING

There were no new hires during the month of August.

SEPTEMBER REGIONAL WATER BOARD MEETING

The Regional Water Board meeting for October is scheduled to be held in Santa Rosa on October 24, 2002.

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For

a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our web-site at <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov>.